

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. Studies have clearly shown that news content suffers when media is consolidated and we see this again here.

What happens when we get down to just 2 or 3 conglomerate companies owning all the major tv, radio and newspapers? When one candidate clearly supports the interests of large conglomerate companies and the other candidate does not, which candidate do you think will get the best coverage? Which will get the same kind of treatment Kerry is getting from Sinclair?

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you.